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Alberta
CAREER DEVELOPMENT
AND EMPLOYMENT
Immigration and
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IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA

(Overview from 1985 to 1989)

September 1990

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this overview is to provide a summary of information on immigration to Alberta. The information for this overview is provided by the Labour Market Research Division of Alberta Career Development and Employment. Much of the data was taken from the Immigration Landing Records (IMM 1000 system) of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission. Unless otherwise stated, tables and charts are based on calendar years. The data for 1989 is preliminary and subject to revision.

The Immigration and Settlement Branch of Alberta Career Development and Employment has the primary provincial mandate for immigration and settlement issues in Alberta. This includes funding support for community based immigrant aid organizations, the administration of provincial responsibilities in the Business Immigration Program, funding for specialized English as a Second Language training, and the development of information materials for prospective immigrants and newcomers.

This overview is updated annually. If you have any comments or suggestions for changes in future overviews, please contact:

Alberta Career Development and Employment
Immigration and Settlement Branch
11th Floor, CityCentre
10155 - 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 4L5

I. ALBERTA'S POPULATION

Every sixth resident in Alberta is a first generation immigrant. The 1986 Census showed that 368,755 (15.8%) of the 2,340,265 million people in the province were born outside of Canada. In Edmonton and Calgary, where most of the recent immigrants have settled, about 20% of all residents are foreign born.

The "ethnic origin" section of the 1986 Census indicates that the majority of Albertans trace their ancestry back to European countries.

TABLE 1
ETHNIC ORIGINS OF ALBERTANS

	Single Origins	Multiple Origins*	Total	%
British	592,345	780,150	1,372,495	42.9
Western European	246,215	365,200	611,415	19.1
Eastern European	165,430	213,640	379,070	11.9
French	77,585	218,435	296,020	9.3
Northern European	49,155	127,675	176,825	5.5
Aboriginal	51,665	52,265	103,930	3.3
East & South East Asian	80,150	12,575	92,730	2.9
Southern European	46,860	41,825	88,690	2.8
South Asian	30,090	4,555	34,645	1.1
African	7,975	6,490	14,460	0.5
Other	17,570	8,340	25,900	0.8
TOTAL	1,365,040	1,831,150	3,196,180	100.0

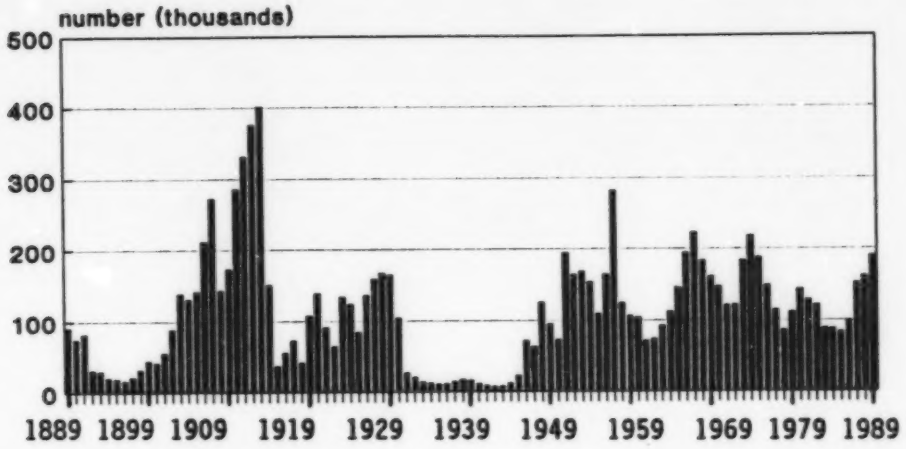
* This includes those who specified more than one ethnic origin. Because some people were counted more than once, the total is greater than Alberta's population of 2,340,265.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1986 Census, Profile of Ethnic Groups.

II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Immigration to Canada has fluctuated widely over the past 100 years, with a high of 400,870 immigrants in 1913 and a low of 7,576 in 1942. Levels were at their highest from 1910 to 1913 when large numbers of immigrants were admitted to Canada largely to increase the population in western Canada. Immigration levels were at their lowest from 1931 until 1945 during the Great Depression and World War II. (see Figure 1)

FIGURE 1
IMMIGRATION TO CANADA
BY CALENDAR YEAR, 1889 - 1989

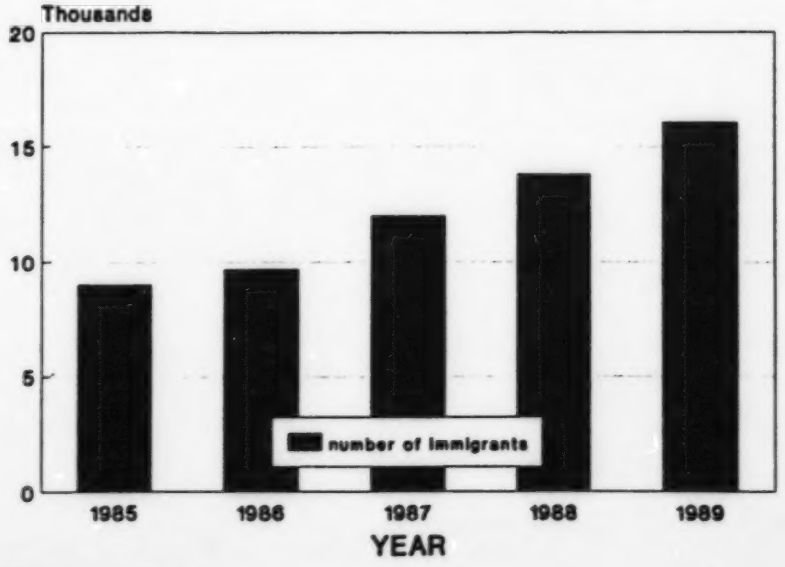


III. IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA

A. LEVELS

Since the beginning of 1985, over 60,000 new immigrants have arrived in Alberta. Annual immigration levels increased from 9,001 in 1985 to 16,062 in 1989, with an annual average of over 12,000. Alberta's 1989 immigration level was the highest since 1982 when the number of immigrants arriving in the province was 17,949. (see Figure 2)

FIGURE 2
IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA, 1985 - 1989



• 1989 data is preliminary

B. PROVINCIAL COMPARISONS

Alberta received 8.4% of the 190,337 immigrants who came to Canada in 1989. This was slightly lower than the 9.0% received by Alberta for the preceding four years from 1985 to 1988. (see Table 2)

The proportion of Canada's immigrants who came to Alberta in 1989 (8.4%) was lower than the proportion of Canada's total population in Alberta (9.3%).

Alberta was the fourth largest receiving province in 1989, after Ontario (54.6%), Quebec (17.8%), and British Colombia (13.1%). (see Table 2)

In 1989, Alberta received a greater proportion of Canada's refugees (12.1%) and a smaller proportion of independent immigrants than its proportion of Canada's immigrants overall (8.4%). (see Table 3)

TABLE 2
IMMIGRATION TO CANADA
BY PROVINCE, 1985 - 1989

PROVINCE	1985-1988		1989*	
	#	%	#	%
Ontario	264,166	53.1	103,978	54.6
Quebec	86,954	17.5	33,883	17.8
B.C.	66,908	13.4	25,014	13.1
Alberta	44,674	9.0	16,062	8.4
Manitoba	16,972	3.4	6,086	3.2
Other	17,877	3.6	5,314	2.8
TOTAL	497,551	100.0	190,337	100.0

* Preliminary Figures

Source: IMM 1000, Employment and Immigration Canada, June 1990.

TABLE 3
IMMIGRATION TO CANADA
BY CLASS, TOP FIVE RECEIVING PROVINCES, 1989

CLASS	ONTARIO	QUEBEC	B.C.	ALBERTA	MANITOBA
Family	33,821 55.9%	9,294 15.4%	8,457 14.0%	5,489 9.1%	1,907 3.2%
Convention Refugee & Designated	21,285 57.9%	5,043 13.7%	2,613 7.1%	4,449 12.1%	1,883 5.1%
Independent					
Assisted Relative	14,501 67.8%	2,050 9.6%	1,586 7.4%	1,597 7.5%	1,220 5.7%
Entrepreneur & Self Employed	3,578 23.9%	6,760 45.2%	3,375 22.6%	642 4.3%	217 1.5%
Investor	525 24.5%	563 26.2%	905 42.2%	102 4.8%	41 1.9%
Other Independents	30,268 55.4%	10,173 18.6%	8,078 14.8%	3,783 6.9%	818 1.5%
TOTALS	103,978 54.6%	33,883 17.8%	25,014 13.1%	16,062 8.4%	6,086 3.2%

Note: Percentages indicate what proportion of Canada's immigrants in each class went to each designated province.

*Preliminary Figures

Source: IMM 1000, Employment and Immigration Canada, June 1990

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF 1989 IMMIGRANTS TO ALBERTA

A. COUNTRIES OF LAST PERMANENT RESIDENCE:
(Top Ten Source Countries for 1989 Immigrants)

Poland	1,817	11.3%
Hong Kong	1,668	10.4%
Vietnam	1,416	8.8%
Philippines	1,066	6.6%
India	759	4.7%
USA	694	4.3%
England	632	3.9%
China	551	3.4%
Brunei	522	3.2%
Lebanon	487	3.0%
TOTAL	9,612	59.8%

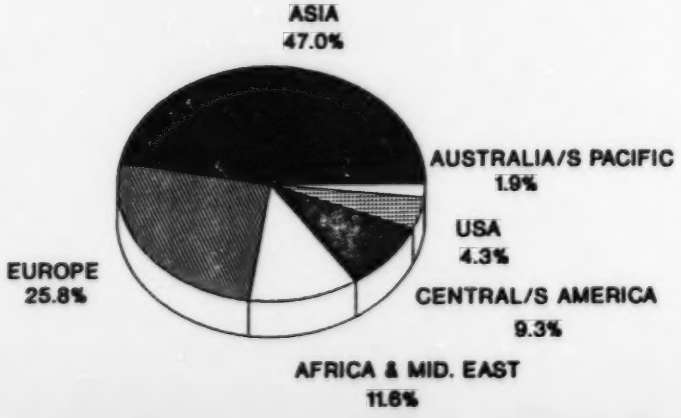
In 1989, Poland, with 11.3% of immigrants, replaced Hong Kong as the top source country of Alberta's immigrants. Hong Kong and Vietnam were second and third, with 10.4% and 8.8% of Alberta's immigrants respectively.

B. WORLD AREA

The greatest proportion of recent immigrants to Alberta have come from Asia. From 1985 to 1989, the percentage of immigrants from Asia ranged from 45.1% in 1986 to 53.3% in 1988. In 1989, the percentage was 47.0%.

The number and proportion of immigrants from Europe increased in 1989, compared with the previous four years. In 1989, 4,140 European immigrants came to Alberta. The annual average from 1985 to 1988 was 2,118. In 1989, this represented 25.8% of Alberta's immigrants, compared with 19.0% from 1985 to 1988.

FIGURE 3
IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA
BY WORLD AREA, 1989



C. KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH

The proportion of Alberta's immigrants without knowledge of English has remained between 50% and 60% in the last 5 years. However, due to increasing immigration levels, the numbers of immigrants in need of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction has increased from 5,273 in 1985 to 9,006 in 1989.

D. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

The level of education of immigrants has increased in recent years. In 1985, 29.0% of immigrants had some post-secondary education (including trade certificates), while in 1989, that proportion rose to 32.5%.

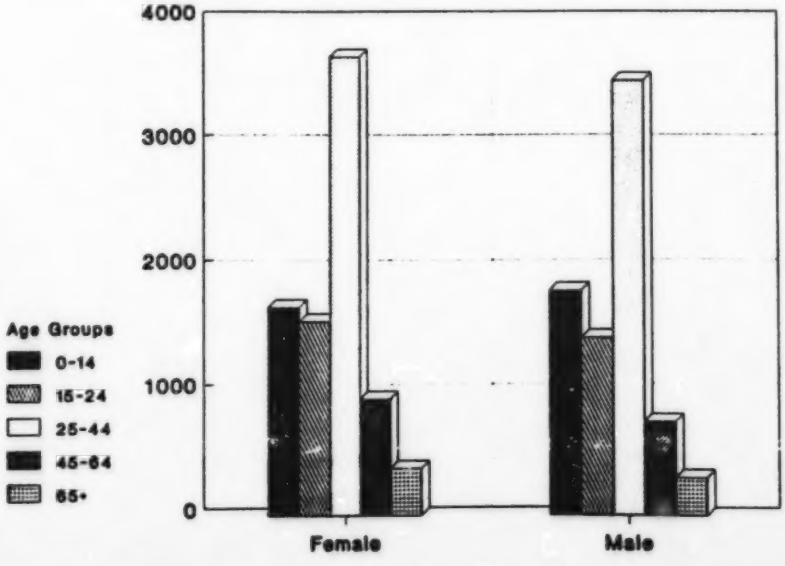
E. EMPLOYMENT

A Statistics Canada survey conducted in 1987 indicates that 59% of immigrants over the age of 15 were employed, 8% were unemployed, and 33% were not actively participating in the Alberta labour force. This compares with a labour force participation rate of approximately 72% for the population as a whole. Of those immigrants who found employment, 25% were in service occupations and another 12% were in occupations in the management and administration category.

F. AGE GROUPS AND GENDER

The figure below represents the age distribution of Alberta's 1989 immigrants according to their gender. The ratio of females to males has not significantly changed in recent years. In 1989, 51.5% of immigrants were women and 48.5% were men. The largest proportion (44.8%) of all immigrants were in the 25-44 age group.

FIGURE 4
AGE GROUPS AND GENDER FOR 1989 IMMIGRANTS



G. IMMIGRATION CLASS

During the last five years, the proportions of Alberta's immigrants arriving under the different immigration classes were as follows: 38.4% Family Class, 25.4% Convention Refugee and Designated Classes, and 36.2% Independent Class. (See Appendix 1 for definitions of the different immigration classes.)

Family Class immigrants as a proportion of Alberta's immigrants has been decreasing in recent years. In 1985, 4,180 Family Class immigrants represented 46.4% of total immigration to Alberta. In 1989, 5,489 people arrived to join their families in Alberta, accounting for 34.2% of the total immigration.

Of the 36,744 **refugees** admitted to Canada in 1989, Alberta received 4,449 (12.1%), representing 27.7% of Alberta's total immigration. From 1985 to 1989, refugees comprised 25.4% of Alberta's immigrants.

In 1989, 9.9% of Alberta's immigrants were **assisted relatives**. The proportion from 1985 to 1989 was 9.2%.

Business immigrants (including their dependents) represented 4.6% of Alberta's total immigration from 1985 to 1989. In 1989, there were 744 business immigrants who arrived in Alberta, compared with 245 in 1985, 467 in 1986, 565 in 1987, and 790 in 1988.

Of the applicants in the Entrepreneurs and Self-employed categories of the Business Immigration Program who were approved to immigrate to Canada in 1989, Alberta ranked fourth as the province of destination behind Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia. In 1989, 188 visas were issued for business applicants to come to Alberta. This represented a projected job creation of 339, job retention of 38, and $163,378,000 available for investment.

In the Investor category, 10 Specific Projects and Privately Administered Investment Syndicates were designated in 1989, representing a potential investment in Alberta of $85,000,000.

The proportion of **other independent immigrants** has increased over the past few years. In 1985, 12.2% of all Alberta's immigrants were in this category, while in 1989, this percentage had increased to 23.6%. Retirees comprise approximately 1% of immigrants.

TABLE 4
IMMIGRATION TO ALBERTA BY IMMIGRATION CLASS
1985 TO 1989

CLASS	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989*	TOTAL
Family	4,180 46.4%	4,489 46.4%	4,837 40.4%	4,333 30.9%	5,489 34.2%	23,328 38.4%
Convention Refugee & Designated	2,480 27.6%	2,648 27.4%	2,634 22.0%	3,222 23.0%	4,449 27.7%	15,433 25.4%
Independent						
Assisted Relatives	997 11.1%	592 6.1%	1,160 9.7%	1,236 8.8%	1,597 9.9%	5,582 9.2%
Entrepreneurs, Self-Employed and Investors	245 2.7%	467 4.8%	565 4.7%	790 5.6%	744 4.6%	2,811 4.6%
Other Independents	1,099 12.2%	1,477 15.3%	2,779 23.2%	4,444 31.7%	3,783 23.6%	13,582 22.4%
TOTALS	9,001 100%	9,673 100%	11,975 100%	14,025 100%	16,062 100%	60,736 100%

*Preliminary Figures

Source: IMM 1000, Employment and Immigration Canada, June 1990

V. ASSISTANCE FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS TO ALBERTA

Federal and provincial governments and community organizations provide immigrants with specialized services, programs, and information materials. Only refugees sponsored by the Government of Canada receive direct financial assistance (up to 12 months, or until the head of the family has found employment). Refugees must pay back, in full, any government loans covering passage to Canada. All other immigrants are expected to pay their own expenses with assistance from their families or private sponsors.

A. ALBERTA'S RESPONSE

The Immigration and Settlement Branch of Alberta Career Development and Employment has the primary provincial responsibility for immigration and settlement in Alberta. The following programs and services are available.

1. Immigration Programs

Provincial immigration responsibilities include: the administration of the Business Immigration Program, information for employers related to labour force recruiting, international exchange programs and foreign worker movements, and the Alberta Immigration Review Panel. Information and counselling services regarding economic and social immigration to Alberta are also provided. These services are available to Alberta residents, businesses and employers, and prospective immigrants.

2. Settlement Programs

A wide range of organizations and service providers receive provincial government support. Grants and program development assistance is provided to community based immigrant aid organizations as part of the Integrated Service Program (ISP), a partnership among the federal and provincial governments and the volunteer sector.

3. English as a Second Language Secretariat

The English as a Second Language Secretariat co-ordinates policy and activities concerning language training for adult immigrants in Alberta; collects and analyzes data on ESL programming and funding issues; and administers grants to organizations and institutions which are involved in ESL assessment, referral and instruction.

4. Information Materials

A variety of publications, available in several languages, have been developed which provide information to prospective and new immigrants.

B. COMMUNITY RESPONSE

1. Immigrant Aid Organizations

Community-based immigrant aid organizations are active in many Alberta communities. Their purpose is to assist newcomers directly, in non-monetary ways, to become settled in Alberta. These organizations provide orientation to life in their communities, interpretation and translation services, general counselling, and assistance in finding accommodation and employment. (Immigrant aid organizations throughout the province which are funded by Career Development and Employment are listed on the back cover. See Table 5 for statistics on where in Alberta immigrants settle.)

There were 24,968 newcomers serviced by paid staff and 119,136 hours that volunteers in funded immigrant aid organizations contributed during the 1989/90 fiscal year.

2. Group Sponsorship

The Immigration Act provides local groups (of at least five Canadian citizens or permanent residents) and legally incorporated organizations with the right to sponsor refugees, members of a designated class, and their families.

When groups undertake a sponsorship, they agree to provide material, financial and social assistance for the refugee(s) for one year. Material assistance involves the sponsor providing the refugee with furnished accommodation, food, clothing, and household and incidental effects. Although the sponsors have financial responsibility for refugees, the refugee can receive Unemployment Insurance benefits if they qualify. These refugees are not eligible for social assistance for their first twelve months in Canada.

Some organizations have agreements with the federal government to expedite the processing of refugees being sponsored. In Alberta, there are four major sponsors with these "umbrella agreements": the Polish-Canadian Congress, the Roman Catholic Church, St. Barnabas Refugee Society, and the Anglican Church. These groups sponsor approximately three-quarters of all group sponsored refugees.

Group sponsorship accounted for 2,380 or 53.5% of the 4,449 refugees to Alberta in 1989. The Canadian Polish Congress was the largest sponsor, contributing to the increase in Polish immigrants to Alberta. Of the 1,817 immigrants to Alberta from Poland in 1989, 1,135 or 62.5% arrived under group sponsorship.

Information on group sponsorship is available from local Canada Immigration Centres.

TABLE 5
IMMIGRATION TO MAJOR COMMUNITIES IN
ALBERTA, 1985 - 1989

COMMUNITY	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989*	TOTAL
Edmonton	3,694 41.0%	3,881 40.1%	4,968 41.5%	6,106 43.5%	7,106 44.2%	25,755 42.4%
Calgary	3,669 40.8%	4,152 42.9%	5,104 42.6%	5,755 41.0%	6,748 42.0%	25,428 41.9%
Red Deer	231 2.6%	215 2.2%	255 2.1%	318 2.3%	287 1.8%	1,306 2.2%
Lethbridge	253 2.8%	215 2.2%	286 2.4%	301 2.1%	276 1.7%	1,331 2.2%
Medicine Hat	155 1.7%	172 1.8%	165 1.4%	178 1.3%	176 1.1%	846 1.4%
Fort McMurray	100 1.1%	109 1.1%	156 1.3%	185 1.3%	203 1.3%	753 1.2%
Other	899 10.0%	929 9.6%	1,041 8.7%	1,182 8.4%	1,266 7.9%	5,317 8.8%
TOTAL	9,001 100%	9,673 100%	11,975 100%	14,025 100%	16,062 100%	60,736 100%

* Preliminary Figures

Source: IMM 1000, Employment and Immigration Canada, June 1990

APPENDIX 1

IMMIGRATION CLASSES

The Canada Immigration Act has established three basic classes of admissible immigrants. These classes are the Family Class, Convention Refugee Class, and Independent Class, which includes assisted relatives, entrepreneurs, self-employed, investors, and other independents.

A. FAMILY CLASS

Canadian citizens and permanent residents can sponsor certain relatives who want to immigrate to Canada. Relatives eligible for sponsorship include the following: spouse, fiance(e), unmarried children, and parents.

The sponsoring relative in Canada must agree to provide for the lodging, care, and maintenance of the applicant and accompanying dependents for up to ten years.

B. REFUGEE CLASS

The definition of the refugee class is based on the United Nations Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. A Convention refugee is "any person who by reason of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, (a) is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable or, by reason of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or (b) not having a country of nationality, is outside the country of his/her habitual residence and is unable or, by reason of fear, is unwilling to return to that country."

Canada also recognizes a Designated Class. These individuals are in refugee-like situations, but may not meet the strict definition of a Convention Refugee.

Currently, there are 3 designated classes: Indochinese (Cambodia, Laos & Vietnam), Political Prisoners and Oppressed Persons (Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Poland and Uruguay), and Self-Exiled Persons (Eastern Europe and U.S.S.R., except Yugoslavia). Countries from where designated class refugees are accepted may change, depending on the political situation in each country.

C. INDEPENDENT CLASS

1. Definitions

The third class of immigrants includes assisted relatives, business immigrants, retirees, and other independent immigrants who apply on their own to come to Canada. Independent immigrants are expected to be self-supporting immediately, requiring minimal settlement assistance.

Assisted relatives include certain relatives not eligible under the family class, including brothers, sisters, married children, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

People who apply to immigrate to Canada as an **entrepreneur** must intend to operate a business in Canada that will employ one or more person.

A **self-employed person** must intend to establish a business that will create employment for that person, or contribute to the cultural and artistic life of Canada.

To be eligible to immigrate as an **investor**, a person must have a proven track record in business and have a personal net worth of $500,000 or more.

Other independent immigrants include retirees and other independents who come on their own initiative.

2. The Point System

Independent immigrants, except for retirees, are selected on the basis of a point system. The total number of points which an applicant can receive is 100. The number of points required to qualify for entry is 70.

Points are accumulated on the basis of factors such as education, age, language ability, specific vocational preparation, and Canadian demand for the applicant's employment skills.

If a relative in Canada has submitted an undertaking of assistance on the applicant's behalf, 10-15 (bonus) points may be earned, depending on the relationship.

A business man or woman who qualifies under the Business Immigration Program automatically receives 45 (bonus) points towards the 70 points needed.

Immigrant Aid Organizations Supported By Alberta Immigration and Settlement

St. Barnabas Refugee Society
Suite 400, 10136 - 100 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J OP1
Telephone: 428-7094

Edmonton Immigrant Services Association
Cromdale School
11240 - 79 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5B 2K1
Telephone: 474-8445

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for the Assistance of Newcomers
10125 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5H OV4
Telephone: 424-7709

Calgary Immigrant Aid Society
900A - 825 - 8 Avenue, S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2T3
Telephone: 265-1120

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
1400 - 1st Street, S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2R OV8
Telephone: 245-8800

Calgary Immigrant Women's Centre
802 - 14 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2R ON6
Telephone: 245-6785

Lethbridge Immigrant Settlement Association
506 - 4 Avenue, South
Lethbridge, Alberta T1J ON3
Telephone: 327-5333

Catholic Social Services Immigration and Settlement Services
10420 - 107 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5H OW1
Telephone: 424-3545

Changing Together - A Centre for Immigrant Women
Room 209, 10010 - 107A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 4H8
Telephone: 421-0175

Catholic Social Services
#3, 4908 - 50 Street
Camrose, Alberta T4V 1R1
Telephone: 672-1304

Central Alberta Refugee Effort (C.A.R.E.) Committee
#202, 5000 Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta T4N 4B2
Telephone: 346-8818

Catholic Social Services
#202, 5000 Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta T4N 4B2
Telephone: 346-7055

Saamis Immigration Services Association
422 - 6th Street S.E.
Medicine Hat, Alberta T1A 1H5
Telephone: 529-0700

Peace Area Settlement Services Society
10118 - 101 Avenue
Grande Prairie, Alberta T8V OY2
Telephone: 538-3232